

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A cooperative processing apparatus comprising:

a sending and receiving unit ~~for sending and receiving~~ that sends and receives cooperation information ~~to be used for executing~~ in which a flow of services are described, the flow of services are to be performed on document data by a plurality of cooperative processing apparatuses in a cooperative manner and a processing result of a service to and from other cooperative processing apparatus;

a service processing unit ~~for performing~~ that performs a ~~prescribed~~ service on the basis of according to the cooperation information; and

a control unit for performing:

a first control of controlling, when receiving cooperation information, the service processing unit ~~so that it to~~ performs the service on the basis of according to the cooperation information;

a second control of sending back, to a ~~transmission source~~ cooperative processing apparatus ~~of which has sent~~ the cooperation information, a processing result indicating whether the service processing unit has performed the service normally or abnormally, and, if the service processing unit has performed the service normally, copying the cooperation information and controlling the sending and receiving unit so that it sends a copy of the cooperation information to a next cooperative processing apparatus that is to perform a next service on the basis of according to the cooperation information; and

a third control of controlling the sending and receiving unit so that if an abnormality occurs in the next cooperative processing apparatus after the next cooperative processing apparatus receives the cooperation information, the sending and receiving unit

sends a copy of the cooperation information to a substitute cooperative processing apparatus capable of performing a substitute service for the next service.

2. (Previously Presented) The cooperative processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the third control is configured to determine that an abnormality has occurred in the next cooperative processing apparatus if:

a processing result of the next service received from the next cooperative processing apparatus for performing the next service indicates occurrence of an abnormality, or

if no processing result of the next service is received in a prescribed period of time from the next cooperative processing apparatus for performing the next service.

3. (Previously Presented) The cooperative processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the third control is configured to suspend the flow and control the sending and receiving unit so that it sends a processing result indicating occurrence of an abnormality to a cooperative processing apparatus that sent the cooperative information first if no processing result of the next service or the substitute service for the next service is received within a predetermined processing period of time or if there exists no cooperative processing apparatus capable of performing a substitute service for the next service.

4. (Currently Amended) A cooperative processing method comprising:

a first control step of controlling a service processing unit for performing a service ~~so that it to~~ performs the prescribed service ~~on the basis of~~ according to the cooperation information when the cooperation information is received by a sending and receiving unit for sending and receiving cooperation information ~~to be used for executing in~~ which a prescribed flow of services are described, the flow of services are to be performed on document data by a plurality of cooperative processing apparatuses in a cooperative manner and a processing result of a service to and from other cooperative processing apparatus;

a second control step of sending back, to a ~~transmission source cooperative processing apparatus of which has sent~~ the cooperation information, a processing result indicating whether the service processing unit has performed the service normally or abnormally, and, if the service processing unit has performed the service normally, copying the cooperation information and controlling the sending and receiving unit so that it sends a copy of the cooperation information to a next cooperative processing apparatus that is to perform a next service ~~on the basis of~~ according to the cooperation information; and

a third control step of controlling the sending and receiving unit so that if an abnormality occurs in the next cooperative processing apparatus after the next cooperative processing apparatus receives the cooperation information, the sending and receiving unit sends a copy of the cooperation information to a substitute cooperative processing apparatus capable of performing a substitute service for the next service.

5. (Previously Presented) The cooperative processing method according to claim 4, wherein the third control step judges that an abnormality has occurred in the next cooperative processing apparatus if:

a processing result of the next service received from the next cooperative processing apparatus for performing the next service indicates occurrence of an abnormality, or

if no processing result of the next service is received in a prescribed period of time from the next cooperative processing apparatus for performing the next service.

6. (Previously Presented) The cooperative processing method according to claim 4, wherein the third control step suspends the flow and controls the sending and receiving unit so that it sends a processing result indicating occurrence of an abnormality to a cooperative processing apparatus that sent the cooperative information first if no processing result of the next service or the substitute service for the next service is received within a predetermined

processing period of time or if there exists no cooperative processing apparatus capable of performing a substitute service for the next service.

7. (New) The cooperative processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the service processing unit retains a copy of the cooperation information, and if an abnormality occurs in the next cooperative processing apparatus, the sending and receiving unit retrieves from the service processing unit the retained cooperation information and sends the retained cooperation information to the substitute cooperative processing apparatus.

8. (New) The cooperative processing method according to claim 4, further comprising:

retaining a copy of the cooperation information at the service processing unit; and if an abnormality occurs in the next cooperative processing apparatus, retrieving a copy of the retained cooperation information and sending the retained cooperation information to the substitute cooperation processing apparatus.

9. (New) The cooperative processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein when a normal termination is received, the retained copy of the cooperation information is erased.

10. (New) The cooperative processing method according to claim 8, further comprising erasing the retained copy of the cooperation information when a normal termination is received.